

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

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**THE ROLE OF KHMER PEOPLE IN
BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA**

SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS

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INTRODUCTION

1. The necessity of the thesis

The community of 53 ethnic minorities in Vietnam, including the Khmer, is an inseparable part of the great national unity bloc. Throughout the history of the nation, ethnic minorities have made important contributions to the cause of building and defending the country, clearly demonstrating their role and position in the political, economic, cultural and social life of the country. Imbued with Ho Chi Minh's thought on great national unity and deeply aware of the great role of ethnic minorities, with its progressive nature, the Communist Party of Vietnam always emphasizes the importance of ethnic minorities; at the same time, it sets out correct policies to promote the role of ethnic minorities with the principle: "Ensuring equality, solidarity, respect and mutual assistance among ethnic groups for development" [45, p.170]. The Communist Party of Vietnam identifies ensuring legitimate rights, promoting the role of the subject and improving the lives of ethnic minorities as strategic tasks of decisive significance in consolidating the great national unity bloc, firmly protecting national independence and building socialism.

Based on that principle, the Party and State of Vietnam have issued many comprehensive policies and strategies to promote the socio-economic development of ethnic minority areas, including the national target program on new rural construction (NTM). This is a major, consistent and long-term strategic policy, clearly demonstrating the superiority of our regime in developing agriculture, farmers and rural areas - forces and regions that play a particularly important role in the process of sustainable and comprehensive development of the country. The goal of the program is to build rural areas that are comprehensively developed in terms of economy, culture, society, environment and political system; thereby improving the material and spiritual life of rural people, including ethnic minorities.

In the Mekong Delta (MD) - the country's key agricultural region - the Khmer ethnic group lives in large numbers and is concentrated. In the region, this is the second largest ethnic group, after the Kinh, mainly living in provinces such as Soc Trang, Tra Vinh, Kien Giang... With its own characteristics of population, culture and society, the Khmer people are not only the direct beneficiaries of rural

development policies but also play an important role in realizing the goals of the new rural construction program. In recent years, the new rural construction in this region has recorded encouraging achievements, contributing to changing the face of the countryside and significantly improving the lives of the people, with significant contributions from the Khmer people.

However, compared to the general level of the country and the development potential of the region, the process of building new rural areas in areas with a large Khmer population is still limited. The rate of communes and districts meeting new rural standards is not high, the quality of some criteria is not sustainable, especially in the fields of planning, infrastructure development, economic restructuring, socio-culture and building the grassroots political system. The role of Khmer people in all stages from participating in planning to organizing the implementation of the new rural program has not been effectively promoted. The causes of this situation stem from many factors, including: limitations in the level of education, the endogenous capacity of the community; the specificity of culture, customs and practices; the suitability and effectiveness of implementation of policies; and many difficulties in the capacity of officials, infrastructure, and specific geographical and social conditions of the areas where Khmer people live.

For the above reasons, the author chose and researched the issue of "The role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta today" as a doctoral thesis in Scientific Socialism, with the desire to assess the current situation and issues, thereby proposing solutions to promote the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta today.

2. Purpose and research tasks of the thesis

2.1. Research purposes

Based on the theoretical and practical research on the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas, the thesis aims to analyze and evaluate the current situation, causes and issues arising in the process of promoting the role of this community in the Mekong Delta region. From there, propose solutions to effectively promote the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the period up to 2030, with a vision to 2045, contributing to the successful implementation of the goal of sustainable rural development in the direction of socialism.

2.2. Research mission

Firstly, an overview of domestic and foreign research works related to the topic, thereby identifying research gaps and clarifying the contents that need to be focused on within the framework of the thesis.

Secondly, clarifying a number of theoretical and practical issues on the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta region, thereby forming a theoretical framework for analyzing the current situation and proposing solutions.

Thirdly, analyzing and evaluating the current situation of promoting the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in localities in the Mekong Delta region, pointing out the achievements, limitations, causes and issues arising in the current period.

Fourthly, proposing viewpoints and a system of solutions to promote the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas until 2030, with a vision to 2045.

3. Subject and scope of research of the thesis

3.1. Subject

The research object of the thesis is the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta today.

3.2. Research scope

Regarding content: the thesis studies the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta, focusing on studying the role of Khmer people according to the criteria groups for building new rural areas: planning; socio-economic infrastructure; economy and production organization; socio-cultural development and environmental protection; building the political system; and ensuring national defense, security, and social order and safety.

Regarding space: the thesis studies the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta based on selecting research samples in 03 provinces with a large population of Khmer people, namely Tra Vinh, Soc Trang, and Kien Giang.

Regarding time: the thesis studies the implementation of the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta from 2015 to the present and proposes viewpoints and solutions to promote the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta until 2030.

4. Theoretical basis, and research methods

4.1. Theoretical basis

The thesis is based on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh thought, and the Party's viewpoint on the role of ethnic minorities

in development policies in general and in new rural construction in particular; at the same time, it inherits a number of research results in a number of related scientific fields, such as philosophy, political science, public management, ethnology, economics, etc.

4.2. Research methods

The thesis uses the methodology of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, specific research methods such as: analysis, synthesis, statistics, comparison, description, sociological investigation, document research, etc.

- *The sociological investigation method* is carried out in the following way: the thesis surveys by questionnaire (200 questionnaires) for Khmer people in the provinces of Tra Vinh, Soc Trang, Kien Giang; surveys by questionnaire (100 questionnaires) for the team of cadres and civil servants at the commune level (including the team of cadres in the Party agencies, government, Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations) in districts and communes in the provinces of Tra Vinh, Soc Trang, Kien Giang. The total number of surveyed subjects, including Khmer people and cadres and civil servants, is 300 people. Based on the information collected from the survey subjects, the author of the thesis analyzes, synthesizes, and makes comments related to the content of the thesis topic.

- *Method of synthesizing and analyzing documents* to serve the research, the topic has collected, synthesized and processed relevant studies on new rural construction, on Khmer people in the Mekong Delta, on methods and forms of participation of ethnic minorities in various fields, on the role of Khmer people in new rural construction; synthesize and systematize the Party's policies and guidelines on new rural construction, on promoting the role of Khmer people in new rural construction; Collect, synthesize, and analyze the current status of new rural construction in the Khmer ethnic minority area in the Mekong Delta through a system of reports and statistical data compiled and published by central and local agencies...

- *Interdisciplinary method*, studying the role of Khmer ethnic minority in new rural construction in the Mekong Delta is the collection and synthesis of research results from many specialized scientific fields, such as philosophy, political science, public administration, ethnology, economics... Therefore, the research operations of the thesis are carried out through a combination of interdisciplinary research methods.

5. New contributions of the thesis

On the basis of inheriting and developing related studies, the thesis continues to clarify the theoretical and practical basis of promoting the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas; analyze and evaluate the current situation and issues arising in implementing the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta; analyze and forecast factors affecting the implementation and promotion of the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas by 2030; and propose viewpoints and solutions to promote the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta from now to 2030.

6. Theoretical and practical significance of the thesis

6.1. Theoretical significance

The thesis contributes to providing and systematizing the theoretical and practical basis for implementing the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta; the current status of implementing the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta and the causes; thereby proposing viewpoints and solutions to promote the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta by 2030.

6.2. Practical significance

- The research results of the thesis contribute to providing arguments for innovating mechanisms and policies and improving the operational capacity of institutions to promote the role of the Khmer people in development policies in general and in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta in particular.

- The thesis is a reference document for some training and research institutions on the role of ethnic minorities and Khmer people in current development policies.

7. Structure of the thesis

In addition to the introduction, conclusion, and references, the thesis contains four chapters and nine sections.

Chapter 1: Overview of previous research related to the dissertation

Chapter 2: Theoretical and practical issues regarding the role of the Khmer ethnic community in the new rural development in the Mekong Delta

Chapter 3: The current situation of the implementation of the role of the Khmer ethnic community in the new rural development in the Mekong Delta and emerging issues

Chapter 4: Perspectives and solutions for promoting the role of the Khmer ethnic community in the new rural development in the Mekong Delta toward 2030, with a vision to 2045

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC

1.1. RESEARCH WORKS RELATED TO THE THESIS

First, a group of research works on new rural construction in the Mekong Delta

Up to now, new rural construction in our country in general and new rural construction in the Mekong Delta is a topic that researchers have approached from many different perspectives, typically by a number of authors such as Nguyen Van Sanh, Le Hanh Thong, Vo Van Thang, Nguyen Kim Ton, Nguyen Minh Sang, Pham Huynh Minh Hung, Huynh Thanh Hieu... In general, existing works on this issue mention a number of aspects, such as studies that have clarified a number of theoretical issues, such as the concept of rural; the concept and content of new rural construction; the importance of new rural construction; some works that have also clarified achievements and limitations in new rural construction and pointed out the causes and solutions to improve the effectiveness of new rural construction in our country today.

Second, a group of research works on the Khmer people and the role of the Khmer people in socio-economic development

Up to now, research in our country on the Khmer people and the role of the Khmer people in socio-economic development is quite rich, mentioned, and approached from many different perspectives, which can be mentioned through a number of typical studies, such as Pham An, Tran Van Anh, Dang Tri Thu, Nguyen Quoc Dung, Bui Thi Hong Loan, Nguyen Thi Hue... These studies have mentioned the characteristics of the Khmer people, the current situation of the Khmer people in the Mekong Delta, and the role of the Khmer people in socio-economic development.

Third, a group of research works on the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta and the role of ethnic minorities in building new rural areas

A number of domestic and foreign studies have mentioned the role of ethnic minorities as well as the role of the Khmer people in building new rural

areas. Regarding domestic research on the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas, we can mention some studies, such as those by Nguyen Huu Tho and Nguyen Thanh Son... Some studies in China on the role of ethnic minorities in building new rural areas, such as studies by Gao Jing, Yang Zhuo, Li Guan...

1.2. VALUE OF RELATED SCIENTIFIC WORKS AND ISSUES THE THESIS NEEDS TO FOCUS ON RESEARCH

1.2.1. Value of scientific works related to the thesis

Based on the overview of the research situation related to the thesis topic, the research situation can be assessed in the following main aspects:

First, some studies have mentioned some theoretical issues on new rural construction in our country and the Mekong Delta.

Second, some studies have mentioned some theoretical issues on promoting the role of the people as subjects in new rural construction in our country and the Mekong Delta.

Third, some studies have clarified the characteristics of the Khmer people in the Mekong Delta; the current situation of socio-economic development in the Khmer people in the Mekong Delta; the current situation of new rural construction in the Khmer people in the Mekong Delta.

Fourth, some studies abroad have mentioned the role of ethnic minorities in community development.

Fifth, although not many, some studies have mentioned the current situation and solutions to promote the role of the Khmer people as subjects in development policies as well as in the process of building new rural areas.

1.2.2. Research focus of the thesis

From the above analysis, it can be seen that, although approached from many different angles, the studies related to the thesis topic have suggested many contents that the thesis is studying, which have reference value for the implementation of the thesis. However, there has not been any work that directly and systematically studies the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta. This is a gap that needs to be researched, contributing to clarifying and supplementing theoretical and practical issues about the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta today. The research focus of the thesis is: (i) (i) clarifying the theoretical and practical basis for the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta; (ii) analyzing the current situation and causes and clarifying some issues arising

in the implementation of the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta; (iii) proposing viewpoints and solutions to promote the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta by 2030, with a vision to 2045.

Chapter 2

SOME THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES ON THE ROLE OF THE KHMER PEOPLE IN BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA

2.1. CONCEPT OF NEW RURAL AREA CONSTRUCTION IN THE MEKONG DELTA AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KHMER PEOPLE IN NEW RURAL AREA CONSTRUCTION IN THE MEKONG DELTA

2.1.1. Concept of rural areas and new rural construction in the Mekong Delta

2.1.1.1. Concept of rural areas

Inheriting the rational core of related viewpoints, in this study, the thesis views rural areas as the living area of the majority of residents who are farmers, working mainly in the agricultural sector and managed by the communal government. From this concept, it can be seen that rural areas have basic characteristics such as the main production activity being agriculture (cultivation, livestock farming, forestry, aquaculture, seafood); the subjects of production and living activities in rural areas are mainly farmers; rural society also has full economic, political, cultural, and social characteristics and other social relations but also has specific features compared to urban areas, such as social relations, clans, level of community cohesion, etc.

2.1.1.2. Concept of new rural areas

New rural areas are conceived as regions or territorial scopes that coincide with rural territories by the administrative unit of “commune” (different from “commune level”); are the living areas of rural residents; are the places where agricultural economic activities mainly take place; are “communes” with qualitative changes in all areas of economy, society, culture, environment, politics, democracy, and rule of law; and new farmers, thereby ensuring and improving the quality of life of rural residents.

2.1.1.3. Concept of new rural construction in the Mekong Delta

From the content and objectives of the new rural construction policy and the subjects participating in the implementation of this policy, it can be said that new rural construction in the Mekong Delta is a process in which the entire political system in localities in the region and the whole society use synchronously and comprehensively policy tools and measures to promote comprehensive development in rural areas as well as improve the material and spiritual life of rural people in the region, promote gender equality, build synchronous and gradually modern rural socio-economic infrastructure, ensure a bright, green, clean, beautiful, safe rural environment and landscape, rich in traditional cultural identity, adapt to climate change and develop sustainably. Thus, in terms of content, as well as the whole country, new rural construction in the Mekong Delta is comprehensive in all areas from economic development, political system innovation, cultural and social development, and strengthening national defense-security to environmental protection. In terms of subjects, as well as the whole country, new rural construction in the Mekong Delta is the cause of the whole political system and the whole society according to the motto "party organization leadership, government leadership, society cooperation, people participation.". In terms of goals, as well as the whole country, new rural construction in the Mekong Delta aims at comprehensive and sustainable rural development, meeting the requirements of the new development era, mainly improving the quality of life of rural residents, and better ensuring the rights of rural residents. As well as the whole country, new rural construction in the Mekong Delta plays a particularly important role in ensuring comprehensive rural development and synchronous development between rural and urban areas, at the same time creating favorable conditions for the industrialization and modernization process in the region in particular and the whole country in general.

2.1.2. Characteristics of Khmer people in new rural construction in the Mekong Delta

The Khmer people in Vietnam are one of 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam, living mainly in the South, especially in the Mekong Delta. In the Mekong Delta, the Khmer people are distributed in three main ecological regions: the inland region, the coastal region, and the southwestern border mountainous region. The Khmer people have some common characteristics like other ethnic minorities in our country, such as having a long-standing tradition of solidarity and attachment

in the unified ethnic community-nation; residing dispersedly and intermingled with the Kinh people and other ethnic minorities; and residing in areas with important positions in terms of economy, politics, national defense, security, and ecological environment. In addition, the Khmer people also have some unique characteristics in terms of population distribution, demography, economy, human resources, education level, technical expertise, housing, living conditions, culture, and cross-border ethnic relations.

2.2. CONCEPT, CONTENT, AND FACTORS AFFECTING THE ROLE OF KHMER PEOPLE IN BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA

2.2.1. Concept of the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta

Based on Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's thought, and the practice of Vietnam in the development stages, promoting the role of ethnic minorities is a consistent policy of our Party. Conclusion No. 65-KL/TW dated October 30, 2019 of the Politburo on continuing to implement Resolution No. 24-NQ/TW of the 9th tenure on ethnic work in the new situation emphasized the adoption of many solutions to promote the role of ethnic minorities in socio-economic development, including some aspects such as: (i) Promoting all resources, exploiting potentials and advantages for sustainable development of ethnic minority and mountainous areas; (ii) Well implementing the grassroots democracy regulations, strengthening the activities of self-management models in the community; praising, honoring, and encouraging prestigious representatives, businessmen, and scientists in ethnic minority communities who have made many contributions to the cause of building and defending the Fatherland. It can be said that the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas is a concept used to indicate the important position of Khmer people in building new rural areas as well as the work that Khmer people need to do in this process to contribute to promoting the effective implementation of the new rural construction policy, thereby bringing practical benefits to the people themselves and society.

2.2.2. The role of Khmer compatriots in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta: Content and requirements

2.2.2.1. Main content showing the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta

Based on the content of the new rural construction policy, the criteria for building new rural areas (national criteria for new rural communes) and inheriting a number of related approaches, the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas can be determined on the following contents:

First, the role of Khmer people in planning new rural construction with aspects such as people knowing information about planning for new rural areas and participating in the process of building and implementing planning for new rural areas through different forms.

Second, the role of Khmer people in building and developing socio-economic infrastructure. The core content is that Khmer people "know," "discuss," "do," "check," and "supervise" the implementation of projects in developing socio-economic infrastructure.

Third, the role of Khmer people in economic development and production organization. The role of Khmer people in this field is mainly in accessing information as well as participating in building and implementing projects and programs for socio-economic development in new rural construction.

Fourth, the role of Khmer people in cultural and social development and environmental protection.

Fifth, the role of Khmer people in building the political system and ensuring political security and social order and safety.

2.2.2.2. Requirements for promoting the role of Khmer people in new rural construction in the Mekong Delta

From the theoretical and practical aspects, it can be seen that the requirements for promoting the role of Khmer people in new rural construction are as follows: (i) it is necessary to promote the role of Khmer people in all areas and contents of new rural construction; (ii) It is necessary to ensure the promotion of the role of Khmer people in each stage of the new rural construction process, from planning to implementation, assessment and adjustment of policies and projects on new rural construction on the basis of good implementation of the Law on Democracy at the Grassroots Level; (iii) the promotion of the role of Khmer people in new rural construction in the Mekong Delta needs to be ensured at all levels and issues related to implementation need to be resolved; (iv) the promotion of the role of Khmer people in new rural construction in the Mekong Delta needs to ensure the requirements of breadth and depth.

2.2.3. Factors affecting the implementation of the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta and the specificity of promoting the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta

2.2.3.1. Factors affecting the implementation of the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta

There are many factors affecting the implementation of the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas, including some main factors such as: natural conditions, socio-economic conditions of the Mekong Delta; the process of industrialization, modernization and market economy in the context of international integration; the Party's guidelines and policies and the State's laws; the capacity and operation methods of the grassroots political system in the Khmer region; the internal conditions and capacities of Khmer people; traditional culture of Khmer people; ethnic, religious and cross-border ethnic relations of the Khmer people.

2.2.3.2. Specificity in promoting the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta

The specificity in promoting the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta is determined based on the main aspects, including the context of the Mekong Delta, the level of development of the Khmer people, the conditions of the Khmer people, cultural and ethnic-religious factors, and cross-border relations.

Chapter 3

THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE ROLE OF THE KHMER PEOPLE IN BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA AND THE ISSUES RAISED

3.1. ACHIEVEMENTS AND LIMITATIONS IN THE ROLE OF KHMER PEOPLE IN BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA TODAY

3.1.1. Achievements in the implementation of the role of Khmer people in the construction of new rural areas in the Mekong Delta

Firstly, in the planning of new rural areas

From primary and secondary information, it can be seen that in both the construction and implementation of the planning of new rural areas, Khmer people in the Mekong Delta have promoted their role to a certain extent,

especially the level of voluntary relocation or land handover to implement the planning of new rural areas.

Secondly, in the construction and development of socio-economic infrastructure

Reports on the construction of new rural areas in localities with a large Khmer population, as well as survey results, show achievements in the implementation of the role of Khmer people in the construction and development of socio-economic infrastructure. The survey results for Khmer people show that a significant proportion of Khmer people know about projects on electricity, roads, schools, stations, cultural facilities, and commercial infrastructure in communes and hamlets, and a significant proportion of Khmer people have actively participated in the implementation of socio-economic infrastructure development projects. Reports from localities on new rural construction have also noted

Thirdly, in economic development and production organization

Reports on new rural construction in localities with a large Khmer population and the survey results of the thesis both show achievements and advantages in implementing the role of Khmer people in economic development and production organization. The survey results for Khmer people show that 86% of Khmer people surveyed answered that they or household representatives have participated in giving opinions on economic development plans and plans to shift crop and livestock structure in communes and hamlets. With the survey question "Assuming that you are currently unemployed, will you actively seek a job to earn income?", 67.5% of respondents said that they would actively seek a job to earn income; 21% of respondents who are Khmer people said that Khmer households participate in cooperatives or certain linkage models in agricultural production and consumption.

Fourth, in socio-cultural development and environmental protection

In recent years, promoting the role of Khmer people in new rural construction has contributed to creating achievements in socio-cultural development and environmental protection as one of the important contents of new rural construction. The survey results for cadres and civil servants at the grassroots level, where there are many Khmer people, on the level of participation of Khmer people in cultural and social development and environmental protection in the locality show that the assessment score of cadres

and civil servants at the grassroots level, where there are many Khmer people, is at a fair level, with a score of 3.9/maximum score of 5.0 points. The survey results for Khmer people also show advantages in promoting their role in the process of building new rural areas.

Fifth, in building the political system and ensuring national defense, security, social order, and safety.

Both secondary and primary data show achievements and advantages in implementing the role of Khmer people in this field. The survey results for Khmer people show that 86% of Khmer people surveyed said that they had participated in the election of People's Council delegates at all levels and members of the Hamlet Development Board in the most recent time; 82% of Khmer respondents said that they or their household representatives contributed opinions to local Party committees, authorities, mass organizations, and officials and civil servants in the commune; 54.5% of Khmer respondents said that they or their household representatives were members of socio-political organizations such as the Youth Union, Women's Union, and Veterans' Association; 59.5% of Khmer respondents said that they or their household members participated in reporting and denouncing wrongdoings and violations of the law by officials and civil servants in the commune and some responsible people in the hamlet; 60% of Khmer respondents said that they or their household members reported to local officials about illegal acts and activities of bad forces. Besides, different models and movements on ensuring national defense, security, and social order and safety implemented by the Vietnam Fatherland Front and people's organizations in densely populated areas have promoted the role of compatriots in this field.

3.1.2. Limitations on the implementation of the role of Khmer people in new rural construction in the Mekong Delta

First, in the new rural construction planning

In the new rural construction planning, there is still a significant proportion of Khmer people (44%) who do not know about the draft new rural construction planning; the level of initiative of Khmer people in participating in contributing opinions is also not high, when 94.2% of respondents said that they were invited to participate in contributing opinions, while the proportion of Khmer people actively contributing opinions is only 17.5% of respondents; 38% of respondents said that households do not relocate or hand over land when the commune implements the new rural construction planning. The limitations and

shortcomings in this content are also reflected in the fact that the level of understanding of the planning criteria of a commune meeting the new rural standards is still low, with 50.5% of the Khmer respondents saying that they understand the planning criteria that a commune meeting the new rural standards must meet. Reports from localities also show that implementing the planning criteria for new rural construction in the Khmer ethnic minority area is still more difficult than in the ethnic majority area.

Second, in the construction and development of socio-economic infrastructure

There are still 37% of the Khmer respondents saying that they do not know about projects on electricity, roads, schools, stations, cultural facilities, and commercial infrastructure in the commune and hamlet. The participation of the Khmer people and ethnic groups in giving their opinions on the order of priority and implementation methods of projects to build electricity, roads, health stations, and cultural houses in communes and hamlets is important for making the implementation of projects meet the needs of the people as well as facilitate the implementation process. However, a significant proportion (30.5%) of Khmer people when asked said that they did not participate in giving their opinions; 33% of Khmer respondents said that household representatives were not invited to meetings to discuss the level of financial contribution in the implementation of projects to build roads, schools, health stations, and cultural houses in communes and hamlets. The level of initiative in giving opinions of Khmer people is also not high; 27.5% of Khmer respondents still said that their households did not contribute resources (funds, land donations, working days) to implement projects on electricity, roads, schools, health stations, and cultural houses in communes and hamlets; 60% of Khmer respondents still said that they or their household representatives did not participate in managing public works and projects in communes and hamlets after the works were completed and handed over. Reports from localities also show that implementing projects on socio-economic infrastructure development in Khmer areas is still more difficult than in ethnic majority areas.

Third, in economic development and production organization

The survey results show that 15% of Khmer respondents still said that their households did not support and respond to the conversion of crop and livestock structure according to the commune's plan and scheme; many Khmer

households still have difficulties in restructuring crops and livestock according to the policy of local authorities. The level of positivity of Khmer people in finding suitable methods to increase income and find jobs is only at the level of "average" to "fair.". With the question, "Suppose you are currently unemployed; will you proactively find a job to earn income or not?" 32.5% of respondents said that they would not proactively find a job to earn income; 79% of Khmer respondents said that their households do not participate in cooperatives or certain linkage models in the production and consumption of agricultural products. Reports from localities show that economic development and production organization in areas with a large Khmer population still face many difficulties; the effectiveness of implementing economic development policies and production organization in areas with a large Khmer population is still lower than in ethnic majority areas.

Fourth, in socio-cultural development and environmental protection

The survey results show that the level of information grasped by Khmer people regarding the plan for socio-cultural development and environmental protection is only average-good. 22% of Khmer respondents said that their households did not receive propaganda information on illiteracy eradication, universalization of preschool, primary, lower secondary, and high school education; 28% of Khmer respondents said that they did not care about encouraging and reminding their children, siblings, or relatives to go to primary, lower secondary, and high school; the rate of mobilizing school-age students at all levels to go to primary, lower secondary, and high school of Khmer people is 99.15%, 86.4%, and 50.9%, respectively, much lower than the national average. The survey results show that 22.5% of Khmer respondents said that they do not have health insurance cards. 66.5% of respondents said that Khmer households do not participate in the process of building village conventions and regulations in the hamlets and villages where they live. 30% of Khmer respondents said that households do not participate in humanitarian and charitable activities and help the elderly, children, meritorious people, people with disabilities, homeless people, and people in difficult circumstances; 36.5% of Khmer respondents said that in the places where Khmer people live (hamlets/phums/rsok), no self-management groups for environmental protection have been established; 52.7% of Khmer respondents said that they or their households do not participate in self-management groups for environmental protection established where they live.

Fifth, in building the political system and ensuring national defense, security, and social order and safety

The survey results show that 14% of Khmer respondents said that they did not participate in the most recent election of People's Council delegates at all levels and Hamlet Development Boards at all. 18% of respondents said that household representatives did not contribute opinions to party committees, party organizations, authorities, mass organizations, and officials and civil servants at the commune level. The percentage of Khmer people who are members of grassroots socio-political organizations is still relatively low, with 45.5% of respondents saying that they are not members of socio-political organizations such as the Youth Union, Women's Union, Farmers' Association, and Veterans' Association; 40.5% of Khmer respondents said that household members did not participate in reporting and denouncing the wrongful acts and violations of the law by officials and civil servants in the commune and some responsible people in the hamlet; 40% of Khmer respondents said that the respondents themselves or household members did not report to local officials about the illegal acts and activities of bad forces; 20% of Khmer respondents said that most recently, household representatives did not attend hamlet meetings to discuss and decide on issues related to the rights and interests of the family...

3.2. CAUSES OF THE CURRENT SITUATION AND ISSUES ARISING ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE KHMER PEOPLE IN BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA TODAY

3.2.1. Causes of the current situation of the Khmer people's role in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta

3.2.1.2. Causes of achievements

First, the system of guidelines and policies of the Party and State towards the Khmer people in the period of renovation and the policy of building new rural areas are consistent with objective reality and meet the needs and aspirations of the Khmer people.

Second, the political system in the Khmer ethnic minority area has made great efforts in performing its functions and tasks, and there has been a positive change in the awareness of cadres and civil servants in implementing the policy of building new rural areas.

Third, the good cultural values of the Khmer people have been promoted in the process of building new rural areas.

Fourth, the improvement in all aspects in the Khmer ethnic minority area under the positive impact of the industrialization and modernization process.

3.2.1.2. Causes of limitations

Limitations in the implementation of the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas are due to many reasons, including objective and subjective reasons, mainly the following:

First, the socio-economic conditions and thinking and awareness of Khmer people still have many difficulties and limitations.

Second, ethnic institutions and policies in general, and policies for Khmer people in particular, are basically correct and suitable for reality, but there are still some limitations and shortcomings.

Third, the capacity and working style of the staff and civil servants still have some limitations; the proportion of Khmer people in the political system in Khmer areas has been raised but still does not meet actual needs.

Fourth, the capacity of the political system to deploy and organize the implementation of new rural construction policies in Khmer areas still has some shortcomings.

Fifth, the influence of traditional cultural factors and the lack of due attention to the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage values of the Khmer people.

Sixth, the sabotage of hostile forces.

3.2.2. Issues arising in the implementation of the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas in the Mekong Delta

First, the requirements for implementing the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas are increasingly high, while the awareness, responsibility, and capacity of a number of cadres, civil servants, and Khmer people in localities with a large Khmer population are still limited.

Second, the requirements for implementing the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas are increasingly high, while the mechanisms and policies to promote the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas are still inadequate and limited.

Third, the requirements for implementing the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas are increasingly high while the socio-economic development conditions of the Khmer people are still difficult and limited.

Fourth, the requirements for the implementation of the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas are increasingly high, while the capacity and operation methods of the political system in localities with a large Khmer population have not yet met the requirements.

Chapter 4

KEY VIEWPOINTS AND SOLUTIONS TO PROMOTE THE ROLE OF THE KHMER PEOPLE IN BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA TO 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045

4.1. FORECASTING THE CONTEXT IMPACT ON PROMOTING THE ROLE OF KHMER PEOPLE IN BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA TO 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045

Forecasting from now to 2030, with a vision to 2045, the international and domestic context with major trends and processes, such as the strong development of science and technology in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution; the development of the knowledge economy; the globalization process; sustainable development trends; industrialization; urbanization; and the development of a socialist-oriented market economy, has both created favorable opportunities and posed many challenges for the development of the Khmer ethnic minority in the Mekong Delta as well as promoting the role of the Khmer ethnic minority in building new rural areas.

4.2. VIEWPOINTS ON PROMOTING THE ROLE OF THE KHMER IN BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA BY 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045

First, promoting the role of the Khmer in building new rural areas must be associated with the comprehensive development of the Khmer ethnic minority region and with the overall development policy of the Mekong Delta.

Second, promoting the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas is the responsibility of the entire political system, first of all the responsibility of the grassroots political system in Khmer ethnic areas.

Third, promoting the role of Khmer people must adhere to the principle of "taking the people as the center" in the process of building new rural areas.

Fourth, promoting the role of Khmer people comprehensively in all fields and aiming for sustainable development.

4.3. MAIN SOLUTIONS TO PROMOTE THE ROLE OF THE KHMER IN BUILDING NEW RURAL AREAS IN THE MEKONG DELTA BY 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045

First, to enhance awareness raising, develop the contingent of cadres, civil servants, public employees and Khmer people to promote the role of Khmer people as the main subject in building new rural areas.

Second, perfect institutions and policies to promote the role of the Khmer in building new rural areas.

Third, comprehensively develop all aspects of the socio-economic life of the Khmer ethnic minority region and promote regional linkages in development.

Fourth, innovate methods and improve the effectiveness of the political system in the Khmer ethnic minority region.

Fifth, promote the internal strength and self-reliance of the Khmer people to enhance their role as the main subject in building new rural areas.

Sixth, proactively fight and prevent all plots and tricks of hostile and reactionary forces to divide the great national unity bloc and reduce the internal strength and will to be self-reliant and self-reliant of the Khmer people in building new rural areas.

CONCLUDE

New rural construction is one of the national target programs of special importance to the sustainable development process of the country in general and rural areas with a large number of ethnic minorities in particular. In particular, promoting the role of the Khmer people - an ethnic community with a large population, a long history, rich cultural traditions and concentrated residence in the Mekong Delta - is a prerequisite to ensure the success and sustainability of the new rural construction program in this area. In recent years, with the close direction of the Party, the drastic management of the State, the synchronous participation of the entire political system and the consensus and active response from the people, the role of the Khmer people in new rural construction has been gradually affirmed and strongly promoted. People have been actively participating in all aspects of the program: from planning,

building infrastructure, developing production, protecting the environment, improving cultural and social life, to building a grassroots political system and ensuring local security and order. The positive changes in the material and spiritual life, political awareness and social responsibility of the Khmer people are vivid evidence of the correctness, consistency and profound humanity of the national policies and guidelines under the leadership of the Party in the period of renovation and international integration. However, the process of promoting the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas still faces many difficulties and challenges, both objective and subjective, manifested in many aspects such as: limited access to information, low level of participation in planning and implementation stages, weak capacity for self-management and social criticism, low level of socio-economic development of the region, lack of and weak grassroots cadres, unsynchronized policy system, some customs and practices are not really suitable for modern development requirements, and especially the negative impact from hostile forces taking advantage of ethnic issues to divide the great national unity bloc, incite separatist and autonomous thoughts, and sabotage local political and social stability. On the basis of applying the theoretical viewpoints of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's thought on the role of the people in the revolutionary cause, together with the survey and analysis of practices in localities with a large Khmer population, the thesis has clearly identified a number of important guiding viewpoints to promote the role of the Khmer people in building new rural areas, including: promoting the role of the Khmer people must be closely linked to the comprehensive development of areas with a large Khmer population and within the overall sustainable development strategy of the Mekong Delta; that is the responsibility of the entire political system, in which the grassroots political system plays a key, direct and regular role; this process needs to thoroughly grasp and apply the principle of "taking the people as the center", taking the Khmer people as the real subject of the process of building new rural areas; The role of the Khmer people needs to be promoted comprehensively in all areas of life, from economy, culture, society to politics and national defense - security, aiming at sustainable and harmonious development, ensuring both

development and preservation and promotion of the nation's fine traditional cultural values. Based on these viewpoints, the thesis has proposed six major groups of feasible, synchronous and suitable solutions for the current context, including: first, enhancing awareness, developing the contingent of cadres, civil servants, public employees and Khmer people to promote the role of Khmer people as the main subject in building new rural areas; second, perfecting institutions and policies to promote the role of Khmer people in building new rural areas; third, comprehensively developing all aspects of socio-economic life of Khmer ethnic areas and promoting regional linkages in development; fourth, innovating methods and improving the effectiveness of the political system in Khmer ethnic areas; fifth, promoting the internal strength and self-reliance of Khmer people to enhance the role of the main subject in building new rural areas; Sixth, proactively fight and prevent all plots and tricks of hostile and reactionary forces to divide the great national unity bloc, reduce the internal strength, self-reliance and self-reliance of the Khmer people in building new rural areas. The conclusions and recommendations of the thesis are valuable in both theory and practice, not only contributing to supplementing the scientific basis for planning and perfecting ethnic policies in the new period, but also playing an important guiding and guiding role in promoting the role of the Khmer people as the main subject in building new rural areas, thereby contributing to the successful implementation of the goal of sustainable development, ensuring national defense - security and the strong aspiration of the entire Mekong Delta region in the current period of promoting industrialization, modernization and digital transformation.

A LIST OF THE AUTHOR'S RESEARCH WORKS PUBLISHED RELATED TO THE THESIS

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